

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
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P 261650Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1091
INFO USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 LISBON 3266

SECSTATE FOR EUR
USIA FOR IOP/M, IEU/MCLAUGHLIN, IBS/PE/HAUSEMAN

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOPN, PO, U.S.
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - SOARES U.S. VISIT

1. WEEKEND MEDIA CONTINUED HEAVY COVERAGE OF VISIT, REPORTING PRINCIPALLY ON SOARES REMARKS UPON RETURN FROM U.S. TO LISBON ON APRIL 23. SOARES' VOA INTERVIEW, BROADCAST APRIL 22, GENERATED CONSIDERABLE IMPACT, AND A TRANSCRIPT WAS REPRINTED IN FULL BY APRIL 23 CENTRIST "JORNAL NOVO" UNDER HEADLINE, "MARIO SOARES IN VOA INTERVIEW: 'WE NEVER WERE CLOSER AND MORE IN TUNE'."

2. FRONT-PAGE HEADLINES INDICATE TOPICS GIVEN GREATEST PLAY: APRIL 25 PRO-GOP "DIARIO DE NOTICIAS"-- "SOARES OBJECTIVES ATTAINED: U.S. AID RECONFIRMED"; APRIL 23 CENTER-RIGHT "O DIA" -- MARIO SOARES TALKS ABOUT THE 'MAJOR LOAN': THERE ARE ALTERNATIVES AVAILABLE IN EVENT OF FAILURE OF THE CONSORTIUM"; APRIL 23 CENTER-LEFT "A CAPITAL" -- "SOARES RETURNS FROM U.S., CARTER WILL VISIT PORTUGAL"; APRIL 22 "JORNAL NOVO" --"CARTER ACCEPTS EANES' INVITATION TO VISIT PORTUGAL"; APRIL 23 PRO-SOCIALIST "A LUTA" -- "IMF LINE OF CREDIT
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IS OPEN AND CAN BE USED."

3. DETAILS ON KEY TOPICS:
(A) CONSORTIUM LOAN: SOARES TOLD PRESS APRIL 23 UPON RETURN ACCORDING TO "DIAORIO POPULAR" AND OTHER THAT "AS FOR THE U.S. THERE NEVER WERE ANY PROBLEMS (WITH THE CONSORTIUM), THERE REMAINING ONLY A DEFINITION OF

THE PARTNERS OF THE AMERICANS, AN INITIATIVE IN THE HANDS OF PRESIDENT CARTER..."

(B) CARTER VISIT TO PORTUGAL AND SOARES' ADMIRATION FOR HIM: "DIARIO DE NOTICIAS" QUOTED SOARES UPON ARRIVAL IN LISBON AS SAYING CARTER ACCEPTED PRESIDENT EANES' INVITATION TO VISIT PORTUGAL. "HE HIMSELF SAID, SOARES REPORTED, "THAT HE WAS EAGER TO MAKE THE VISIT, SINCE HIS SISTER HAS A HOUSE IN PORTUGAL AND CONSIDERS OUR COUNTRY AS A SECOND HOMELAND. SHE OFTEN SPEAKS TO HIM OF PORTUGAL AND FOR THIS REASON HE IS CURIOUS TO BECOME ACQUAINTED WITH OUR COUNTRY. HE TOLD ME THAT HE WOULD COME AT THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY AND THAT HE WOULD REPLY DIRECTLY TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE PORTUGUESE REPUBLIC. WE WILL BE ADVISED THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS OF THE DATE ON WHICH THE VISIT WILL OCCUR." SOARES ALSO STATED, "I WAS GREATLY PLEASED TO FIND THAT AMERICA, AND THUS THE PART OF THE WORLD IT LEADS, IS BLESSED WITH AN EXCEPTIONAL LEADER WHO BELIEVES IN WHICH HE IS DOING, WHO IS COURAGEOUS, AND WHO HAS A GREAT MORAL AND POLITICAL IDEALISM."

(C) ENERGY AND AUSTERITY: PRESS REPORTED THIS STATEMENT BY SOARES RE CARTER'S ENERGY PROGRAM, PRESENTED TO CONGRESS WHILE PORTUGUESE LEADER WAS IN U.S.: "WHEN THE WORLD'S RICHEST COUNTRY FINDS ITSELF CONSTRAINED TO TAKE AUSTERITY MEASURES IT IS EVIDENT THAT A COUNTRY LIKE PORTUGAL.... MUST ALSO TAKES MEASURES WHICH NECESSARILY REPRESENT A SACRIFICE FOR THE PORTUGUESE PEOPLE... BUT WHICH ARE NOT OURS ALONE."

(D) LAJES BASE: SOARES TOLD REPORTERS "THE LAJES PROBLEM UNCLASSIFIED

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WAS DISCUSSED IN A MARGINAL WAY, SINCE IT WAS NOT ON THE AGENDA. IT WAS DISCUSSED IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR ALLIANCE AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE WHICH THE U.S. PROVIDES PORTUGAL WITHIN THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE."

(E) HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOARES' AWARD FROM INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS: "...PRESIDENT CARTER HAS AGAIN LAUNCHED THIS FIGHT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, WHICH IS A LONG-TIME MORAL CONCEPT OF THE AMERICANS AND ONE OF THEIR MOST ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO WORLD CIVILIZATION. IT HAPPENS THAT I, IN A MODEST WAY, ALSO HAVE BEEN A FIGHTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS..."

(F) U.S. BUSINESSMEN: SOARES BEGAN HIS ARRIVAL STATEMENT TO THE PRESS WITH THIS TOPIC, SAYING: "I HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLAIN THE ECONOMIC POLICIES OF THE COUNTRY AND TO GIVE ADEQUATE GUARANTEES FOR THESE POTENTIAL INVESTORS. I BELIEVE THAT THEIR POSITION IS QUITE FAVORABLE, WITH CONSIDERABLE UNDERSTANDING, AND THAT THEY WILL BE SUFFICIENTLY INFORMED ABOUT THE ADVANTAGES FOR INVESTMENTS IN PORTUGAL..."

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4. COMMUNIST PRESS: DOUR EDITORIAL IN APRIL 23 "O DIARIO"
CRITICIZED THE "TORRENTS OF PRAISE" ABOUT SOARES TRIP
WHICH HAD APPEARED IN "STATE-OWNED PRESS." PAPER SAID:
"IT WOULD BE WELL FOR THE PRIME MINISTER UPON HIS RETURN
TO SPEAK LESS ABOUT JAMES CARTER'S 'CHARM' AND TO SAY
MORE ABOUT THE DEMANDS WHICH WERE PRESENTED TO HIM
'OFF THE RECORD' IN CONVERSATIONS WITH THE U.S. PRESIDENT
AND BANKERS AND BUSINESSMEN. WHAT PROMISES WOULD
EXPLAIN A 'SUCCESS BEYOND EXPECTATIONS'? WHAT DID HE
(SOARES) GIVE IN RETURN? IF THE (WHITE HOUSE)
COMMUNIQUE CLARIFIES NOTHING AND THE PRIME MINISTER'S
HAPPINESS IS SO GREAT, SOMETHING MYSTERIOUS OCCURED
IN THE SILENCE OF THE WHITE HOUSE. WHAT THE PEOPLE
CANNOT UNDERSTAND IS HOW PLEASED THE NEW YORK PRESS
WAS TO WRITE THAT DR. MARIO SOARES WILL NOT HAVE HIS
'GIGANTIC LOAN' BEFORE 1978. ... WE REPEAT: THE
PORTUGUESE PEOPLE HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED
IN WASHINGTON DURING THE VISIT OF DR. MARIO SOARES.
WHY SUCH ENTHUSIASM?"
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TAGS: SOPN, PO, US, (SOARES, MARIO)
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